



MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION SUMMARY OF NFA BEST PRACTICE SURVEY

SOME REASONS WOMEN GRADUATES ARE NOT JOINING IFUW

- Potential members do not know what IFUW and NFAs do / who we are
- Websites are not modern enough, sufficiently interactive or refreshed often enough to appeal to young graduates and business and professional women
- NFAs often do not capitalize sufficiently on their scholarships and bursary recipients to build engagement with awardees/ prospective members and even their existing members
- Competition from other women's and professional organizations
- Time constraints
- Changing lifestyles
- Female poverty / unemployment of women graduates

RECRUITMENT

- Have a clear vision of what the NFA is to achieve
- Have a clear vision of what members can contribute to these aims
- Establish broad, practical programmes to address that vision
- Promote your NFA achievements to members, visitors at functions and the public
- Modernize recruitment brochures, flagship magazines and newsletters and keep them updated and of excellent quality
- Hand out brochures/application forms etc at all functions
- Develop an attractive, up-to-date and easily accessible website
- Use electronic application forms, renewal notices and direct debit payment systems
- Set annual fees and fundraising strategies that are considered good value for money, but allow sufficient funding of activities and administration
- Arrange some functions at times suitable for younger mothers and working professional women, but which do not impinge on family life at weekends
- Arrange networking evenings for young members and for women who have received an award or scholarship from the NFA
- Use all possible (free) means of advertising, leaving brochures at libraries, community centres, bookstores, universities, schools, etc
- Publicize functions through community newspapers; be sure to adhere to any deadline they might have for updating information
- Invite members to bring a friend to events - don't forget that word-of-mouth still remains a most powerful means of attracting new members
- Encourage members to take brochures/applications to hand to other women graduates
- Ask members for names and contact details of potential members and mail them relevant information

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- Liaise with other organizations and local tertiary institutions (including staff, alumni associations and graduating women)
- Contact promptly anyone who shows an interest
- Arrange interesting speakers on a variety of topics (although linked to your aims) so that there is something of interest for all members
- Try different venues to attract women from different areas; be aware that if you regularly meet at a university, outsiders may consider that the NFA is part of that particular institution
- Set up various “interest groups” depending on members’ interests/ages/times of meetings
- Network using communication technology
- Include a Public Relations officer on your board/committee
- Recruit students (they can have a lower membership rate)
- Invite potential members to participate in outings
- Involve non-members in research or other activities
- Run mentoring programmes for students/lifelong learning programmes
- Co-operate with other women’s organizations to present programmes/projects

RETENTION

- Designate a person specifically responsible for making new members welcome
- Publish members’ biographies in newsletters/journals
- Arrange a car pool system for new members / older members
- Ensure that relevant information (e.g. from IFUW) is promptly and adequately disseminated to members
- Make sure that all members receive invitations to functions
- Provide skills enhancement / lifelong learning courses to suit the needs of members
- Help members find an appropriate “interest” group
- Encourage members to participate in activities and as observers at Annual General Assemblies/Board/Executive meetings
- Use all possible technology to communicate regularly with members and to engage in activities instead of only the traditional face-to-face style
- Offer interesting regular social events at interesting venues
- Provide international introductions for members traveling and studying
- Publish articles by and items of interest to members
- Maintain personal contacts
- Allow members to develop and implement their own activities
- Send out gentle reminder notes if fees are not paid on time
- Emphasise the “service” aspect of being a member and the value the member can bring to the NFA and the community
- Work at integrating new members
- Arrange an “exit” interview or letter when a member wishes to resign
- Acknowledge members’ contributions
- Encourage husbands or partners to accompany members to social events/meetings
- Give members the sense that their fees are supporting valuable work

IFUW Membership Committee
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